

these questions are not answered, the American people will never know what took place in Benghazi.

THE FARM BILL AND POLLINATORS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Last week's farm bill debacle in the House of Representatives highlighted a fundamental disconnect. My friends in the Republican majority felt that nutrition for poor people was not a priority because they were concerned about increasing government dependence for lower-income Americans.

Yes, there are more people receiving SNAP, or what we used to call food stamp benefits, because that's how the system is supposed to work. After our Nation suffered a near collapse of the economy, and with a much larger population of over 313 million people, we would expect that, in the face of persistent unemployment and job loss, more people would be on food stamps. We want them to get this assistance. It helps those families and it helps the economy.

Yet, by the same action, my friends passed the most expensive farm bill provisions in our Nation's history. Just like the direct payment program, which gave 75 percent of the payments to 10 percent of all farmers, the new price targets and crop insurance programs manipulate the market, concentrate wealth in the hands of the few, and fail to implement any basic reforms such as means testing and payment limits. The irony was not lost on many who watched the price tag go up and the benefits be concentrated in the hands of those who need it the least.

The bill lacked meaningful reform. The long overdue elimination of direct payments was coupled with a lavish increase in a new entitlement, shallow loss provisions of crop insurance. It locked in the currently high commodity prices as a threshold going forward. There were additional direct payments for cotton and a refusal to reform egregious sugar provisions. Subsidies for wealthy farmers are supported over innovation, research, and conservation. The bill lavished support on those that needed it the least, while stripping out nutrition support through the SNAP program, because they didn't want to foster dependence, all while a blind eye was turned to abuses in the lavish crop insurance program where fraud is 50 percent higher than in the maligned SNAP, or food stamp program.

I am hopeful that if this bill goes on to conference, we'll be able to reduce the costs, provide adequate support by reinstituting nutrition programs, and address long overdue reform for crop insurance.

At the same time, there would be some provisions that could actually

bring people together. For years, I've been working in areas of protecting the pollinators. There are 250,000 little species that pollinate our food and help create \$200 billion worth of food crops worldwide. One in every three forks of foods that we eat is due to pollination, as well as the flowers we enjoy, fruits, chocolate, and even tequila. Many of these things depend on these humble workers. Yet we've watched real threats to the critical habitat for pollinators. I'm hopeful that we can add a simple, nonpartisan provision that will make a difference for these protections.

Neonicotinoids are insecticides which have been linked to large bee die-offs. In one instance, it happened to 50,000 bees in Oregon last week. These insecticides have been banned for 2 years in Europe. I'm hopeful that as the farm bill goes forward, we can address putting a temporary ban on their sale here in the United States, taking a deeper dive on the impact they have on pollinators and, indeed, on the entire food chain for this very persistent substance that has the potential of affecting the impact not just of the health of bees but of our families as well. I'm also hopeful that we'll have a farm bill that can include low- or no-cost provisions like pollinating protection to bring people together to strengthen agriculture. These are vital parts of nature and of our food chain.

In the past, the farm bill wasn't a partisan battlefield. If we can focus on providing help for people who need it the most, rather than lavish subsidies for people that need it the least, and focus on innovation, conservation, and, yes, pollinator protection, things like this can strengthen our food supply, save money, protect the environment, and maybe enable us to make some progress in an area so far that looks embarrassingly remote.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 11 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Eternal God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We ask discernment for the Members of this people's House, that they might judge anew their adherence to principle, conviction, and commitment,

lest they slide uncharitably toward an inability to listen to one another and work cooperatively to solve the important issues of our day.

Give them the generosity of heart, and the courage of true leadership, to work toward a common solution, which might call for compromise, even sacrifice on both sides. We pray that their work results not in solutions where some are winners and some losers, but where all Americans know in their hearts that we are winners.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. FOXX led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. Under clause 5(d) of rule XX, the Chair announces to the House that, in light of the resignation of the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the whole number of the House is 434.

JOBS REPORT MISLEADING

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, according to Investor's Business Daily:

From the media to Wall Street, June's jobs report is being spun as a major positive, a sign the economy is back on track. Maybe the pundits should look at the actual numbers, which are abysmal. At June's pace of 195,000 new jobs a month, it will take 11 months to get back to where we were in 2007. It's even worse when you consider all of the net addition to June jobs—repeat, all—were part time. The underemployment rate shot up from 13.8 to 14.3 percent. This isn't a solid jobs report. It's a crisis.

House Republicans have passed legislation to promote jobs. Building the Keystone pipeline alone can create nearly 200,000 jobs. In the Midlands of South Carolina, the earthmover tires made by Michelin Corporation are shipped to Alberta, Canada, for oil sand recovery. At 12 feet high and \$60,000 for each tire, there are over 300 jobs in

Lexington, with another 300 persons building engines for Alberta at MTU in Graniteville of Aiken County.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Happy 40th birthday today, South Carolina Attorney General Alan Wilson.

THE OBAMACARE TRAIN WRECK

(Mr. BOEHNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues, building a stronger economy for all Americans is our top priority here in the House. That's why we're working to simplify the Tax Code, expand energy production, and hold the administration accountable for abuses at agencies like the IRS. It's why, while Senate Democrats have done nothing, the House has passed a bipartisan plan to make college more affordable. And it's why we'll vote tomorrow to make sure that families and individuals get the same break from ObamaCare that the President wants for big businesses.

Over the weekend, the Democratic leader in the Senate said the President's health care law "has been wonderful" for our country. Are you kidding me? If ObamaCare is so wonderful, why are health care prices exploding? Why are millions of Americans getting kicked out of their plans? Why are so many workers losing their jobs or getting their hours cut?

The law isn't wonderful. It's a train wreck. You know it, I know it, and the American people know it. Even the President knows it. That's why he proposed delaying his mandate on employers.

But it's unfair to protect big businesses without giving the same relief to American families and small businesses. The bills by Congressman TIM GRIFFIN and TODD YOUNG will address this problem by delaying both the employer mandate and the individual mandate. I hope Democrats and Republicans alike will vote to do what's fair and protect all Americans from this disastrous law.

OBAMACARE

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, employers need more than a 1-year delay of ObamaCare's economic train wreck. The President's flawed legislation must be repealed in its entirety.

ObamaCare is already increasing health care costs, depressing hiring, and destroying full-time work. Waiting a year to implement some of its confusing, wrongheaded policies will not stop the damage or provide job creators with the certainty they need to figure out whether they can afford to keep their employees. That will come only

when ObamaCare is replaced by competitive, patient-centered health care reforms.

The American people and the American economy deserve better than excuses for unworkable laws. They deserve health care policies that are transparent, responsive, and focused on them. This week, House Republicans will take action to protect every American—individuals, families, and those who manage or work with businesses—from the President's costly broken law. If the employer mandate is being delayed, so should the individual mandate. It's basic fairness. It's fairness for all.

WEST, TEXAS

(Mr. FLORES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow marks the 3-month anniversary of the fertilizer plant explosion in West, Texas. This catastrophic event injured hundreds, took 15 lives, and cost tens of millions of dollars in damage. Since that tragic day, the State of Texas and the entire community of West have been working tirelessly to rebuild and to recover.

FEMA originally denied Texas Governor Rick Perry's request for a major disaster declaration. Since then, the Governor has filed an appeal for the President to reconsider this decision. I am pleased to be joined by a substantial bipartisan majority of the Texas congressional delegation as we urge the President to support this appeal on behalf of the citizens of West and McLennan County.

It is our hope that the President honors the commitment he made on April 25—to help the citizens of West recover, rebuild, and reclaim their community. We must help ease the burdens this community continues to face through the recovery process.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all Americans keep the community of West in their prayers. God bless America.

THE PRESIDENT'S HEALTH CARE MANDATE DELAYS

(Mr. BURGESS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, some of the Affordable Care Act's oldest and strongest supporters are now coming out against the bill. Yesterday, the three largest unions in the country wrote a letter to Speaker PELOSI and Leader REID and said that the President's health care takeover would "destroy the foundation of the 40-hour workweek that is the backbone of the American middle class." Their concern—my concern—is that the employer mandate will force small businesses to move their employees to part time in an effort to avoid additional expenses.

While I wish they had realized this before spending so much time and so much money on getting the law passed, at this point I couldn't agree with them more.

This week, it is very important that we pass the bills to delay the individual mandate and delay the employer mandate for a year. This will give us time to consider how to keep the Affordable Care Act from destroying our economy.

To quote the union's letter:

Time is running out. We have a problem. You need to fix it. The unintended consequences of the Affordable Care Act are severe.

Further quoting:

We can no longer stand silent in the face of the elements of the Affordable Care Act that will destroy the very health care and well-being of millions of hardworking Americans.

By passing these two bills this week, we will take an important step in minimizing the damage from the Affordable Care Act.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BENTIVOLIO) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

JULY 16, 2013.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on July 16, 2013 at 1:25 p.m.:

Appointments:

World War I Centennial Commission

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable NANCY PELOSI, Democratic leader:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, July 15, 2013.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker, U.S. Capitol,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER BOEHNER: Pursuant to section 13101 of the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act (P.L. 111-5), I hereby reappoint Mr. Paul Egerman of Weston, Massachusetts to the HIT Policy Committee for a term of three years.

Thank you for your attention to this appointment.

Sincerely,

NANCY PELOSI,
Democratic Leader.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 5 p.m. today.